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SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 4th MEETING

Chairman: Mr. SENGWE (Zimbabwe)

Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions: Mr. MSELLE

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The meeting was called to order at 10.05 a.m.

AGENDA ITEM 133: FINANCING OF THE UNITED NATIONS OBSERVER MISSION IN GEORGIA (A/50/731/Add.2; A/51/448)

AGENDA ITEM 134: FINANCING OF THE UNITED NATIONS MISSION IN HAITI (A/50/363/Add.3 and 4; A/51/444)

AGENDA ITEM 157: FINANCING OF THE UNITED NATIONS SUPPORT MISSION IN HAITI (A/51/191/Add.1 and A/51/444)

1. The CHAIRMAN invited the Controller to introduce the reports of the Secretary-General on agenda items 133, 134 and 157 (A/50/731/Add.2, A/50/363/Add.3 and 4, and A/51/191/Add.1, respectively).

2. Mr. TAKASU (Controller), introducing the report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Observer Mission in Georgia (UNOMIG) (A/50/731/Add.2), the current mandate of which was due to expire on 31 January 1997, said that the report was a performance report covering the period from 16 May 1995 to 12 January 1996. For that period the General Assembly had appropriated a total amount of $11,948,718 gross and the actual expenditure had been $9,978,000 gross: the unencumbered balance of $1,970,718 gross had resulted from a number of factors, in particular the release of fixed-wing aircraft earlier than had been anticipated, and savings on civilian personnel costs owing mainly to the fact that the vacancy rate had been higher than expected. As stated in paragraph 10 of the report, a decision on the treatment of the unencumbered balance was to be taken by the General Assembly. The normal practice was for such balances to be used as a credit against future assessments on Member States.

3. Turning to the financing of the United Nations Mission in Haiti (UNMIH), which had originally been established by the Security Council in 1995, he said that the report of the Secretary-General (A/50/363/Add.3) was a performance report for the period from 1 August 1995 to 29 February 1996. For that period, expenditure had amounted to $134,621,400 gross as against an appropriation of $152,011,500 gross, resulting in an unencumbered balance of $17,390,100 gross. As noted in the report, savings had been realized under such items as military and civilian personnel costs, premises and accommodation, infrastructure, transport operations, air operations, communications and other equipment, following the downsizing of UNMIH beginning in late November 1995 as a consequence of the substantial progress made by the Mission towards achieving its goals and its objective of reducing operating costs. At the same time, certain items of expenditure had been higher than originally expected. In particular, additional costs had been incurred under miscellaneous services relating to logistics support provided under letter of assist arrangements for two months pending full mobilization of the commercial contractors in the mission area. As stated in paragraph 9 of the report, the General Assembly was to take a decision as to the treatment of the overall gross unencumbered balance of $17,390,100.

4. A further report on UNMIH (A/50/363/Add.4) concerned the revised cost estimates for the liquidation of the Mission, which was terminated as of 30 June 1996. For that purpose, the General Assembly had provided an appropriation of $15,897,900 gross, to be assessed on Member States. The liquidation costs had, however, been substantially reduced because the UNMIH civilian personnel and some members of the military contingent had remained in the area to form the basis of the United Nations Support Mission in Haiti (UNSMIH), which had been established by the Security Council with effect from 1 July 1996. The estimated liquidation costs of UNMIH had consequently been reduced from $15,897,900 gross to $1,469,900 gross. It was anticipated that the General Assembly would take action to reduce the level of the appropriation accordingly and to assess the reduced amount on Member States, stated in paragraph 9 of the report.

5. The report of the Secretary-General on the financing of UNSMIH (A/51/191/Add.1) contained the proposed budget for the establishment and operation of the Mission for the period from 1 July 1996 to 30 June 1997. The costs were estimated at $57,187,400 gross, providing for 600 contingent personnel, 300 civilian police, 128 international staff, 156 local staff and 14 United Nations Volunteers. The suggested action to be taken by the General Assembly was set out in paragraph 13 of the report, namely the establishment of a special account for UNSMIH, the appropriation of an amount of $57,187,400 gross for the period from 1 July 1996 to 30 June 1997, and the assessment of an amount of $33,957,000 gross for the period of the political mandate, namely 1 July to 30 November 1996.

6. The CHAIRMAN, in the absence of comments from the floor, invited the Controller to outline the recommendations of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (ACABQ) concerning the reports which he had introduced.

7. Mr. TAKASU (Controller) said that the Advisory Committee's recommendation on UNOMIG (A/51/448, para. 12) was that the unencumbered balance of $1,970,718 gross should be credited to Member States against their assessment for the financing of the Mission, in accordance with the established procedure.

8. The recommendations of the Advisory Committee concerning the cost estimates for the liquidation of UNMIH (A/51/444, para. 18) were in line with the recommendations of the Secretary-General, namely that the original appropriation should be reduced from $15,897,700 gross to $1,197,100 gross, the reduced amount to be set off against the unencumbered balance of $17,390,100 gross for the previous period.

9. With respect to the establishment and operation of UNSMIH, the Advisory Committee recommended (A/51/444, para. 35) that action should be taken by the General Assembly as proposed by the Secretary-General in paragraph 13 of his report (A/51/191/Add.1).

The meeting rose at 10.30 a.m.